

08 APR 2002

Mahathir-Finance

MAHATHIR PRAISES FINANCE MINISTRY STAFF

KUALA LUMPUR, April 8 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today praised the officers and staff of the Finance Ministry for their efficiency in managing the country's revenue collection.

The Prime Minister said running the ministry had become difficult as the revenue collection and expenditure now was much bigger compared to the period just after Independence.

"All this gives the officers and staff of the ministry a bigger responsibility and role and we are very proud because they become more efficient from time to time.

Their efficiency was a great help when dealing with problems and new programmes in the ministry," he said in his speech during a visit to the ministry by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Jamalullail.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Finance Minister, said any weakness in that ministry could have adverse implications and affect the overall government administration.

"We can take pride that the Finance Ministry has succeeded in improving its efficiency, but this also means that the workforce has to be expanded and equipped with various new skills," he said.

Such an approach was necessary to smoothen the financial management and administration in Malaysia, he said.

Finance Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Samsudin Hitam, speaking to reporters later, said basic knowledge and information technology skills were the most important element that every government servant should possess these days.

He said setting up a Human Resources Division was an effective step as the division was responsible for providing the various skills and training required by civil servants.

"This is a process of the staff career development, and to date more than 36,000 government servants had participated in various training and courses held," he said.

Dr Samsudin said the recent move to waive stamp duty for house purchases would help to reduce the overhang in the residential property market.

It would also help developers and contractors who suffered losses due to lower revenue, he said.

Dr Samsudin earlier gave a closed-door briefing to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Accompanying the King were Deputy Finance Ministers Datuk Dr Chan Kong Choy and Datuk Dr Shafie Salleh, and Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz.

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